

The Hunt for October's Fatality Reduction Methods

Web Cast Presentation

October 14, 2003

[[Graphic 1, Welcome](#)]

Thank you JC and good afternoon to everyone who is participating in today's Web Cast.

[[Graphic 2, Fatality Reduction](#)]

The Metal and Non-Metal mining industry spans the vast regions of our great nation. From the granite mines of Maine to the aggregate mines in Hawaii. From the large cement plants in Puerto Rico to the gold mines in Alaska. Safety is a Value is the common thread that weaves through our mining community. It is a value to miners and their families, a company's reputation, and the bottom line. It is a culture of prevention. Everyone's actions will reinforce safety when prevention is part of the culture. It is a culture that will achieve success.

Even though Metal and Nonmetal mines have reduced fatalities and injuries over the past few years, we have been closely examining the overall record for trends that might indicate a need for attention.

For instance – we've found that:

- Supervisors have been involved in a disproportionate number of accidents in the metal and nonmetal mining industry.
- About half of all the victims had less than six (6) months of experience in the task they were performing.
- Many victims were engaged in new or uncommon tasks.
- In the majority of fatal accidents, other miners were present. This presence suggested that fellow employees might be able to help prevent some accidents if they observe a hazard and speak out.

[Graphic 3, Speak Out]

The trends that we identified in metal and nonmetal mining became the basis for a special outreach entitled "Speak Out and Make a Difference."

This campaign is just one of the many tools we are using to assist the industry in caring for our nation's most precious resource....the miner. If you are a manager in any type of industry, you have similar tools at your disposal. You have enforcement, through performance evaluations and other mechanisms. You have education and training, through your training department, outside trainers, or on-the-job training and mentoring. And you have technical assistance, through your own specialist staff or outside consultants. All of these can be used to assist your employees and your organization to succeed.

Web broadcasting is another tool at our disposal that we can use to involve you, our stakeholders, in obtaining ideas and thoughts in reducing fatalities and injuries. This broadcast will enable MSHA to utilize our resources to make October a month remembered for football and not funerals.

[Graphic 4, Chart of M/NM Fatal Accidents by Year]

As I said earlier, Metal and Nonmetal mines in the United States have experienced a decline in fatalities over the last several years. Metal and nonmetal mining fatalities declined from 136 in 1978 to 40 last year, a decrease of 71 percent - and the rate of fatal injuries in metal and nonmetal mining dropped by 59 percent during the same period. As you can see on the slide, in calendar year 2001 metal and nonmetal mines had 30 fatalities, the lowest recorded number of fatalities ever in our industry. Our vision, of course, is zero fatalities and zero injuries but the Metal and Nonmetal industry is clearly headed in the right direction. The reduction in fatalities is a great accomplishment – by the mining companies, mine workers, trade associations, labor organizations, state agencies, state grantees and all the individuals and groups having a vested interest in miner's safety and health. I believe we in MSHA have also focused

effectively in areas where we find problems - our efforts have also contributed to the current downward trend in fatalities.

Today we search for answers to a specific area of concern - the historical sharp rise in fatalities that occurs every year during the month of October.

[Graphic 5, Chart of M/NM Fatal Accidents by Month]

Historically, October has been the month where we experience a surge in fatalities. Hopefully, as a result of this web cast, we will obtain information allowing us as a collective group to apply that information and reverse this trend.

[Graphic 6, Chart of M/NM Fatal Accidents by Month for 2003]

As you can see from the slide, fatalities for October 2003 nearly equal fatalities that have occurred in other months of 2003 even though we are only 14 days into the month. Since September 22nd of this year, five fatal accidents have occurred in our industry- these accidents are 23% of all the fatalities occurring in 2003.

[Graphic 7, 21 M/NM Fatalities in 2003]

Looking at fatalities occurring in 2003, we noticed that a majority of the fatalities occurred at stone mines and sand and gravel operations. In addition, cement plants have had an alarming number of fatalities if you consider that there are only about 100 cement plants nationwide. The slide indicates this accounts for nearly 86% of all fatalities occurring in the Metal and Non Metal industry this year. A significant number of fatalities have occurred involving maintenance and repair workers as well as supervisors. The majority of our fatalities in 2003 were in the machinery and slip and fall categories.

[Graphic 8, Maintenance/Repair Work]

Each year, mine maintenance workers are severely injured or killed from a variety of hazards including: electric shock, inadvertent movement of machinery or equipment, and falling off platforms or elevated work areas. In an effort to address those issues, MNM personnel have contacted 28,817 maintenance workers this year to discuss these trends and methods to perform these tasks safely. These maintenance contacts are part of a year long effort to reduce injuries and fatalities.

Despite ours and your best efforts, fatalities continue. For example - on September 26, 2003, a 39-year-old miner was fatally injured at a crushed stone operation. The victim was using a truck-mounted tire handling crane to position two tires in preparation for mounting them on a 50-ton haul truck. As the victim moved the second tire into position, it slipped from the grip pads, struck the ground, and fatally pinned him against the truck.

[Graphic 9, High Incidence of Supervisor Fatalities]

Our review of the data also reveals a puzzling trend of supervisors not being immune from being fatally injured. So far in 2003, nearly 43% of the fatalities involve supervisors. For example, on October 1, 2003, a 45-year-old superintendent was fatally injured at a sand and gravel operation. The victim was using a crane to pick up a generator when the crane tipped over and pinned him inside the cab.

[Graphic 10, 40 Supervisor Fatalities since 1997]

Another example - on March 24, 2003, a 46-year-old supervisor with 8 years mining experience was fatally injured on the surface of an underground stone mine. The victim was using a crane to lift steel plates that were to be used as conveyor belt take-up weights. The plates were being positioned when the rigging failed and the plates fell onto the victim and crushed him. Not only was this individual a supervisor but he was involved in a maintenance and repair task.

[Graphic 11, Miners Performing Non-routine Tasks]

Nearly one third of the fatalities that have occurred this year have involved miners who had less than 6 months training in the task they were performing at the time of their death. Today on this web cast we have safety trainers, safety directors, mine inspectors, and miners with years of experience and knowledge in training individuals to properly work in newly assigned jobs. These fatal accidents that are occurring to this group of miners is alarming to me and I know to you as well. What can we do as safety professionals and experts to eliminate this trend?

[Graphic 12, Make a Difference]

Another area we need to discuss today is where other miners are present when work is being done and a fatality occurs. During that work, someone may perceive the hazard leading to the victim's death but did not speak out to stop the unsafe act or procedure from happening. We at MSHA believe strongly that this lack of action is a major contributing factor to fatalities. Therefore, I initiated the recent "Speak Out and Make a Difference" campaign. In this case, I asked our field office supervisors to visit as many mines as they could to talk with thousands of supervisors and miners about working safely and to provide needed compliance assistance materials. I asked our supervisors to encourage their industry peers to think about their safety, as well as their miners, when planning and carrying out any job. Our supervisors also encouraged all miners to "Speak Out and Make a Difference" if they observed a hazard. As an industry what can we do to reduce the human factors that contribute to fatalities?

[Graphic 13, Email Address]

This is the portion of the Web Cast where you can voice your thoughts and ideas on how we can reverse this trend. If time restraints prevent us from hearing everyone today, please let us hear from you by email. Please email us your thoughts and ideas to loyd.thomas@dol.gov and every comment will be read by me personally. So take the time because your comments maybe the answer to

preventing the next fatality. So with that I would like to take our first call. Please state your name and where you are calling from. Caller No. 1:

Closing Comments

I am sorry to have to close our discussion today but our allotted time is nearly completed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the web cast attendees. The discussion and comments were very informative and enlightening.

[Graphic 14, Triangle of Success]

MSHA strives to be about compliance assistance, partnerships, education, training, and technical support as well as enforcement. MSHA is also striving to encourage good health and safety performance, and not just find poor performance.

[Graphic 15, October is for Football not Funerals]

Safety is a value that this industry needs to elevate and concentrate on if we are going to remember October for Football and Families Not Funerals.

Welcome

**Metal and Nonmetal
Web Cast Presentation**

October 14, 2003

Safety is a Value

The Hunt for October's MNM Fatality Reduction



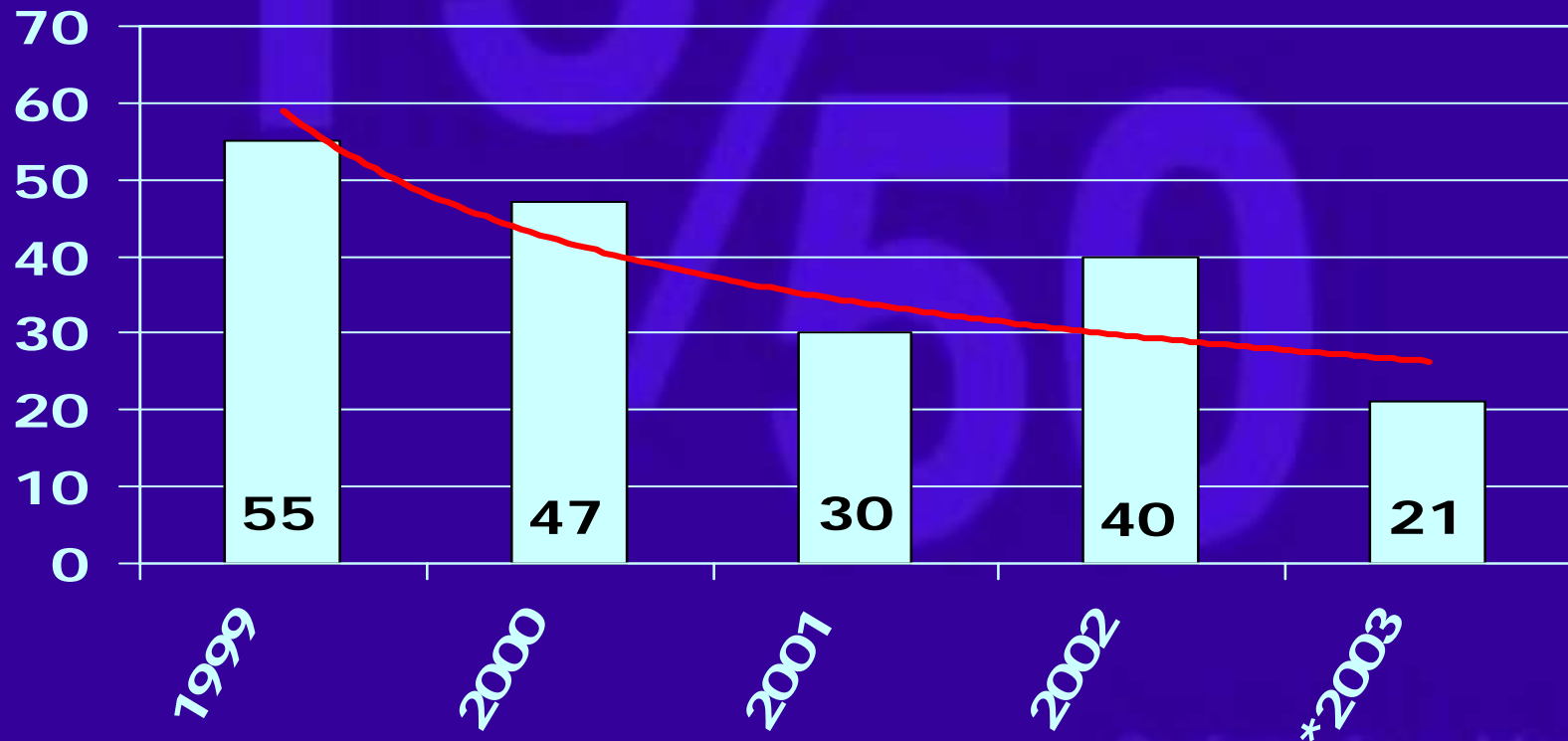
Speak out and make a difference



Safety is a Value

MNM Fatal Accidents

01/01/99 – 10/14/03

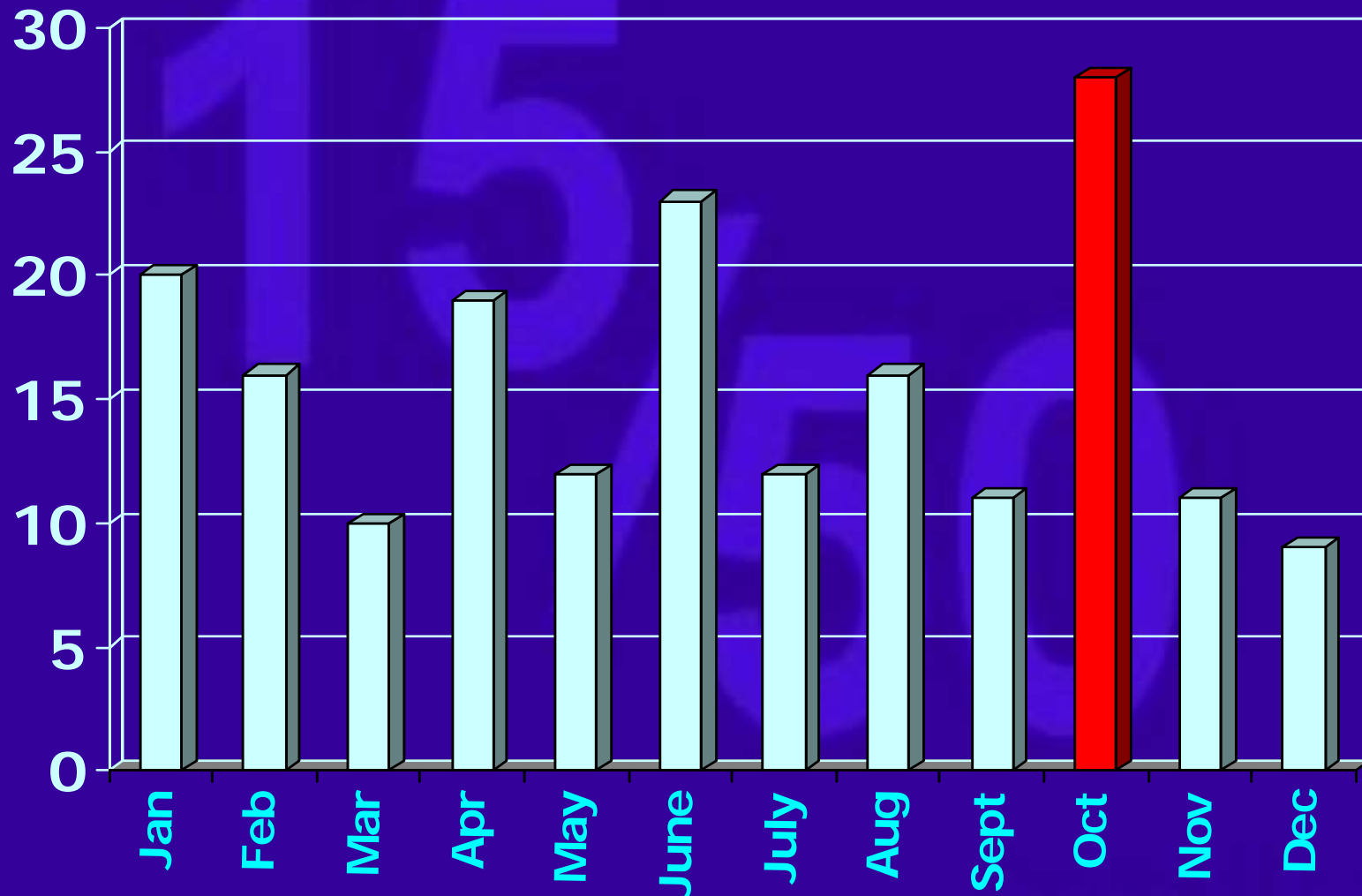


*Fatal Accidents as of 10/14/03

Safety is a Value

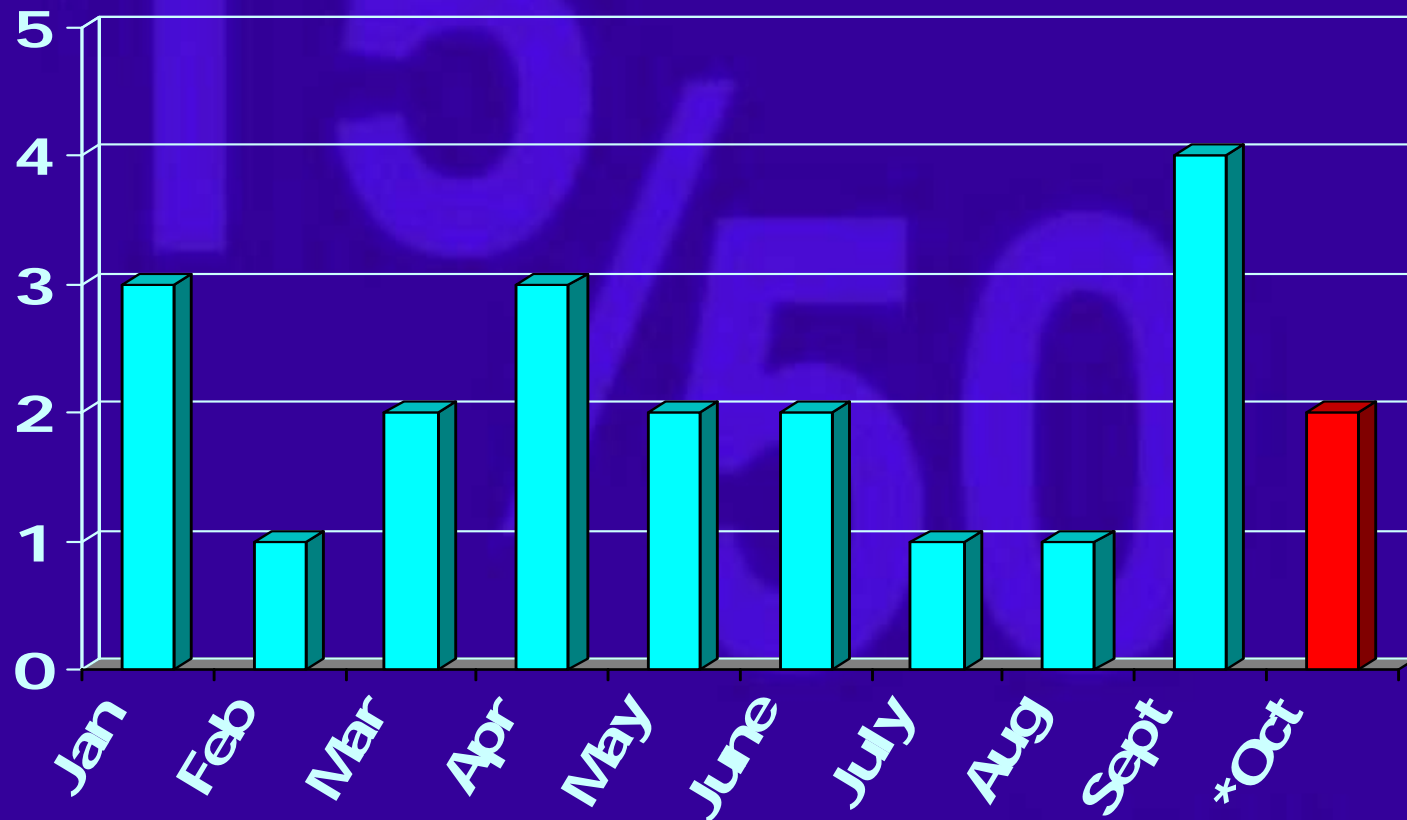
MNM Fatal Accidents by Month

1999 - 2003



Safety is a Value

2003 MNM Fatal Accidents by Month



*Fatal Accidents as of 10/14/03

Safety is a Value

Of the Twenty-One Fatalities that have occurred at Metal and Nonmetal Operations so far in 2003

- **8 occurred at Stone Mines**
- **7 at Sand & Gravel Operations**
- **3 at Cement Plants**

85.7%



Safety is a Value

8

- **13 Fatal Accidents involved maintenance/repair work** **62%**



Safety is a Value

9

•9 Fatal Accidents occurred to Supervisors 42.9%



10

- **Since 1997 – 40 Supervisor Fatalities have occurred**



Miners Performing Non-routine Tasks

- **Nearly one third of the fatalities this year have involved miners who had less than 6 months training in the task they were performing at the time of the accident.**

Safety is a Value

Speak out and make a difference



Safety is a Value

**Contact us at the following e-mail
address:**

loyd.thomas@dol.gov

Safety is a Value



Let's Remember October is for Families and Football

A wide-angle photograph of a large crowd at a football stadium. The stands are filled with spectators, and the football field is visible in the center. A green rectangular text box is overlaid on the field.

Not Funerals